

REMARKS

The Applicants request reconsideration of the rejection.

Claims 16-17 are pending.

The Examiner objected to Claims 16 and 17 as including the errors set forth on page 2 of the Office Action. The Applicants have amended Claims 16 and 17 to address the Examiner's concerns.

Claims 16 and 17 were also rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Hines, U.S. 5,054,279. The Applicants traverse as follows.

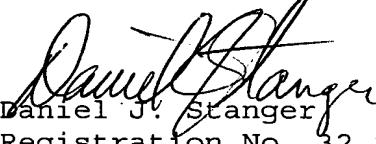
Hines is directed to a water spray ejector system for a steam-injected engine. According to Hines, a steam injection system injects superheated steam into the gas flow path of a steam-injected gas turbine engine. Upon spraying the water into the steam injection system, the water is evaporated by the superheated steam in the steam injection system and mixed with the steam such that the product is still superheated steam, but with an increased mass flow of the superheated steam which is injected into the gas flow path. Thus, in Hines, the high-pressure hot water is vaporized by the heat of the superheated steam, and all of the water is believed to evaporate by the heat.

On the other hand, the claimed invention employs a principle of evaporation which is different from that of Hines. According to the claimed invention, a humidifier is provided with a partitioning means arranged to partition the interior of the humidifier, an introducing port for introducing air into one of the partitions, and a nozzle for jetting water into another partition of the interior of the humidifier, the pressure of the water being higher than that of the air, wherein part of the water jetted by the nozzle is vaporized by a pressure different between the pressure of the water and the pressure of the air (Claim 16; Claim 17 substitutes "working fluid" for "air").

A practical difference between the two principles of evaporation is that, according to the invention, the jetted water stops being vaporized after the water has expanded to a pressure corresponding to that of the air (working fluid), and the remainder becomes surplus water. According to Hines, all of the water must be evaporated by the heat of the superheated steam. Thus, Hines neither discloses nor suggests a humidifier that has the structure or that operates by the principle of the claimed invention.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the Applicants request reconsideration of the rejection and allowance of the claims.

Respectfully submitted,


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